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## BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

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*The Greek Commonwealth: Politics and Economics in Fifth-Century Athens.* By ALFRED E. ZIMMERN. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1911. Gr. 8vo, pp. 454.

Under this title the author, at present lecturer at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and known to students of ancient history for his translations of several volumes of Ferrero's *Greatness and Decline of Rome*, publishes what he calls "The result of an attempt to make clear to myself what fifth-century Athens was really like." Taking his view from the heights of Periclean Athens, with the Funeral Oration of Pericles as a fitting, though often remotely connected "text," he deals with Greek life and history under the three headings of Geography, Politics, Economics.

He lays much stress on geography, and his chapters are charmingly written, forming perhaps the best of the many attempts to give the natural background and environment of Greek life. His treatise on the political development shows how, out of the loosely organized tribal settlements (tribe in the Hebrew sense!), with a weak central power, gradually grew the city-state with its all-absorbing demands on the individual, its successive encroachments upon the "lesser loyalties" of the family, clan, and brotherhood. It depicts also the attendant differentiation into social classes, their struggles for readjustment under changing conditions, especially the hostility between town and country, ending finally in the democracy of Pericles, so called "because it is in the hands not of a few but of the many." This gives the author the opportunity to dispel the current notions about representation in government in Greece (p. 155). The whole—and this is true also of Part III—is done with admirable clearness and logical presentation. In fact, the writer tends to oversimplify in his desire to build up a lucid system.

The purposes of this *Journal*, however, concern themselves mainly with the third section of the book, the Economics. From a mere list of the chapter headings no adequate idea of the contents can be formed. Since, too, the recent theories and conclusions on Greek economic history are not accessible in English a brief summary of the 230 pages devoted to this subject may be helpful. The treatment is dynamic up

to the time of Solon. After that the writer uses the static method, at the same time restricting himself mainly to Athens.

Two basic facts the modern reader is always called upon to remember: the "incredible poverty" which Greek people and states incessantly had to fight, and the fact that because of their sense of harmony and proportion they always correlated "the values of wealth and well-being. . . . What drove them into economic activity and into the development we shall have to trace was not simply our senseless greed for more, . . . but the sober conviction that they needed wealth for the purposes of this civilization" (p. 220). After these preliminaries the author shows that "the one abiding fact about the economics of the Greeks from their earliest days down to the fifth century" is that "Greek civilization is in a sense urban; but its basis is agricultural (pasture, tillage, fruit), and the breezes of the open country blow through the parliament and the market place." Large landed holdings were very scarce, the normal thing being the small proprietor. Tenancy in our sense of the term was almost unknown. To supplement his income the Greek farmer "hunted," i.e., he turned sea-rover or highway robber, a common and unobjectionable calling until Athenian sea police practically did away with it in the fifth century. But the small city-states very soon were peopled to the limit and driven to get supplies from outside to maintain themselves. Border raids, hunting conducted on a large scale by the state, furnished more land and more supplies. Also relief was found in these turbulent centuries (7th and 8th B.C.) in colonization, which in the view of the author and his authorities was primarily agricultural (not commercial as has largely been claimed).

Both in Greece and Palestine (Zimmern, with Eduard Meyer, Gilbert Murray, and others makes much of analogies to Hebrew custom) "as far back as our records go we find the craftsman beside the farmer," who, though in a sense economically self-sufficient, never enjoyed the absolute stage of self-help so much written about. By the sixth century an Athenian possessing a certain kind of skill normally used it to gain a livelihood. Greeks did not recognize the modern distinction between a craft and a profession, and machinery had not yet taken the joy out of craftsmanship, and substituted for the human ties between maker and consumer the pure cash nexus. The Greek contractor worked side by side with his laborers, hiring himself out to the state if needed for public works. Pay was the same for all, as far as we can gather. "The ordinary wage for all categories of workers on the Erechtheum, from the architect to the day laborer, for freeman as for slaves, is a drachma

a day" (p. 258, Francotte). The craftsman's democratic spirit made his associations non-economic forms of grouping. He needed no "labor unions," but enjoyed social and religious club life. The view that in his age of greatness the Greek had despised manual labor is once more denied (compare the recent work by O. Neurath: *Antike Wirtschaftsgeschichte*). The Greek did hate dull, grinding work, "all occupations which involved sitting for long periods in cramped and unhealthy postures, especially in a hot and vitiated atmosphere." This is in keeping with his ideas on the development of the soul and on beauty, harmony, etc. The rougher work, "men's drudgery," he left if possible to slaves, freedmen, and resident aliens. Against the retail trader who is not a producer the Greek always maintained a prejudice. Yet the state interferes very little with his methods of making a living. There is no attempt to set prices generally, though under stress moral suasion is attempted (corn prices). In the Greece of this time "public ownership and even complete communism seem, to serious people, more natural and satisfactory and in harmony with the past than the absolute rights of the individual property owner." In the fifth century they are just beginning to change this view. The state had natural and absolute claims on the wealth of the citizen, just as on his time and person. Recognizing this he looked upon direct taxation as derogatory to his dignity. The whole of Greek finance is informal and primitive, dealt with by amateurs. The prevalent debasing of coinage the writer (with Riezler) explains by the isolation and normal self-sufficiency of the city-state, giving her control over those who used her coins, and enabling her to avoid losing in the long run by loss of credit. With international trade states having good coins crowd others out, especially so at Athens and Corinth. Commercial progress in Greece is slow because of the poverty, the inveterate habit of hoarding, the absolute lack of any system of credit and business confidence, of trustworthy information about foreign firms and markets. Loans are next to unknown, excepting in a few cases of private nature. These are always secured by lands and houses. Trade, owing to the character of the country, was mainly sea trade. It was long hampered by insecurity which was gradually done away with by mutual commercial treaties. The trader was a distributor and carrier, a sort of tramp merchant on a tramp boat.

The problem of population, even after the seventh century, remains ever present. The Greek statesman believed in an ideal and practical limit to the population of a city-state. It was his care to determine that maximum and then keep to it. For this latter purpose he added

to the natural checks of a high death-rate, war, and immigration, the deliberate exposing of weak infants, mostly girls. He looked both to quality and to quantity. The artificial shifting of the ratio between the sexes has profound consequences. As far as these touch the position of woman the author summarizes them, using O. Müller and Wilamowitz as basis. Another check on population is the relatively late marriage of Greek men. In connection with this topic the general problem of Greek male "friendship" is discussed, as is the ideal of physical chastity and manhood in the interest of the state. War is the central "sport" of the Greek: fitting himself for it was his ever-present aim.

Economic self-sufficiency was the ideal of the Greek statesman. In theory this view persisted even after the needs of the Empire had shattered it. The utopias of the fourth century still cling to it. Thinkers and statesmen regretted that it should pass away. Falsely viewing their city as a work of art, they believed that once the stage of complete independence, political and economic, was attained it could be indefinitely maintained. But economic forces, caring little for harmony and natural limits, bore the Athenian city-state onward into the Athenian empire. Solon's legislation aimed to increase the wealth of the state by trade and industry. He encouraged immigration, giving aliens privileges and thus soon filling the city beyond its set limits. The need of more foreign supplies necessitated stable and continuous foreign relations. Trade now becomes a trade in necessities, and the state steps in to encourage, safeguard, and control it, especially the trade in corn and materials for shipbuilding. There must be no question of the naval supremacy of the new Athenian state. Only thus can it successfully maintain itself and attain the end of its existence—teaching the world the practice of civic virtue.

The last chapters deal in a highly sympathetic, if somewhat idealized and subjective fashion, with the policy of Pericles in this regard. Free commercial intercourse toward all sides is to furnish the wealth adequate to the accomplishment of this cultural mission. Athens wants markets and sources of supplies, not conquests and territorial aggrandizement. Aliens receive continued consideration, and even slaves are almost equal members of the commonwealth in its economic sense. Following mainly Eduard Meyer, the author here shows the essence of the Greek theory and practice of slavery. He shows their humanity in this so often misunderstood field of their economic life. Perhaps his view is a shade too rosy. The chapter on mining with its gloomy picture of slave labor serves as a good corrective. After a sketch, which is also a defense, of

the system of imperial finance (the tribute, its collection and disbursement), the writer closes with a sort of balance sheet of the assets and liabilities of Athens at the opening of the Peloponnesian War. Though he is not so cheerfully optimistic in this regard as Beloch, Zimmern's statistics, following mostly Caraignac, must be taken with a great margin of doubt. The spiritual son of Gilbert Murray and Wilamowitz, Zimmern is heir to their failings—splendid and suggestive, but too often rather subjective theories (for samples at random see pp. 100, 109; Murray's "traditional books" idea, 93; the "Periclean phrases," 190 N, etc.; Apollo, 121). The matter of the clans and phratries sounds settled in Zimmern, but there still are grave problems.

Throughout his book the writer has zealously guarded against one-sidedness. His main effort is devoted to economic influences, but without narrowness and without importing the present into the past unduly. His special care has rather been devoted to showing how different in many of its most fundamental presuppositions was Greek economic life from our own (pp. 207, 214, 220, 303, 352). How far this is true is best shown by reference to the conclusion on the Peloponnesian War. Quite at variance with his fellow-countrymen Grundy and Cornford, he actually believes that Thucydides knew more about the causes of that conflict than modern economists. (He is joined by Dickins in the *Classical Quarterly* for October, 1911.) He also justly remonstrates against using Plato and Aristotle as valid sources for the economic situations in the fifth century. "The right method is exactly the reverse, to apply the history of the generation that preceded them to the interpretation of their own doctrines." The author does not lay claim to originality. He frankly states his many secondary sources. The book as a whole is a very welcome and timely one, a much-needed summary of the many monographs, most of them foreign, which would have otherwise remained inaccessible to many of the students at our universities.

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*The Income Tax.* By EDWIN R. A. SELIGMAN. New York: Macmillan, 1911. 8vo, pp. xi+711.

*Income Taxation.* By KOSSUTH KENT KENNAN. Milwaukee: Burdick & Allen, 1910: 8vo, pp. 345.

The income tax, according to Professor Seligman, is destined to come. Like democracy, it is a part of the modern world-tendency. All other great nations levy income taxes, or are rapidly preparing for their